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RUEHJA/ISLAMIC CONFERENCE COLLECTIVE
RUEHBY/AMEMBASSY CANBERRA 0092
RUEHWL/AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON 1137
RHEHAAA/WHITE HOUSE WASHDC

UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 JAKARTA 013229

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SUBJECT: INTERFAITH YOUTH DELIVER POTUS LETTER TO AMBASSADOR

¶1. In advance of President Bush's upcoming visit to Indonesia, a group of Indonesian interfaith youth leaders met with the Ambassador to present a letter to the President (full text in para 6). The delegates represented all of Indonesia's major religions: Islam (the youth wings of mass-based Muslim organizations Muhammadiyah and Nahdlatul Ulama); Christianity (Catholic Youth and the Protestant Indonesian Young Christians' Movement); Buddhism (the Young Generation of Indonesian Buddhists); Confucianism (Confucian Youth); and Hinduism (the Indonesian Hindu Youth Association).

¶2. After thanking the Ambassador for receiving them, a delegate read the organizations' letter to President Bush. While condemning the September 11th terrorist attacks and expressing support for eradicating terrorism, the missive characterized the war on terror as "irrational and unacceptable," adding that "war is not the answer." The group further contended that the U.S. "occupation" of Afghanistan and Iraq might result in a "new generation of terrorist(s)." They urged the USG to put an end to "hegemonic and double standard policies;" cease using military action against independent states; promote a "culture of peace" for dialogue and mediation-based conflict resolution; and work with other nations on UN reform so that it may "play a more effective role in maintaining international peace and security and development." The letter concluded in saying that the signatories do not hate Americans, but simply disagree with U.S. foreign policy.

¶3. The Ambassador welcomed the group and promised to forward their letter. He did take exception, however, with the delegation's contention that U.S. foreign policy has been destabilizing. He argued that since World War II, U.S. foreign policy has focused on improving global stability through democratization and economic development, founding the United Nations precisely as a vehicle for implementing this. He noted the particular success of U.S. foreign policy in encouraging European reunification and fostering economic development and democracy in East Asia. With regard to Afghanistan, the Ambassador said he had no qualms about deposing a regime that harbored a terrorist group responsible for killing more than 3000 people on September 11, adding that the Afghan people welcomed the Taliban's demise. On Iraq, the Ambassador refuted the groups' claim that the U.S. is an occupying force, emphasizing that U.S. troops will leave as soon as the country is stabilized.

¶4. The Muslim Ansor Youth representative commented that in his view, terrorism must be fought throughout the world. However, he suggested, many groups believe that the U.S. uses the war on terror to exert political pressure inappropriately. He asked that the U.S. see Indonesia as a friend, and that the bilateral relationship be a symbiotic one. The Protestant leader acknowledged the common interests between the predominately Christian U.S. and the Indonesian

Christian community. He cautioned, though, that U.S. actions sometimes had negative repercussions for Christians in Indonesia, and said that although they may be America's correlative religionists, Indonesian Christians were Indonesians first. He hoped that the U.S. and Indonesia could work together on what he called the most important issues: poverty and education.

15. The Ambassador responded that the U.S.'s relationship with Indonesia is not based on counterterrorism, although it is an important aspect of U.S. policy. Rather, the U.S. has a strong relationship with Indonesia because it is the world's fourth largest country, and the third and fourth biggest countries must work together. He stressed USG support for Government of Indonesia policies, and said that the U.S.'s number one priority is ensuring that Indonesia succeeds as a prosperous democracy that is a friend on international issues. To this end, U.S. assistance to Indonesia is focused on health, education and other Indonesian priorities. He added that the U.S. does not expect that Indonesia will agree with us on everything, but said that is acceptable in a democracy.

16. Text of letter.

Jakarta, November 17th, 2006

His Excellency
George W. Bush
President of the United States of America

Dear Mr. President,

First of all, we would like to express our gratitude to Your

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Excellency for taking the time to read this letter. On behalf of Indonesian Interfaith Youth Organisations we strongly disagree with your hegemonic foreign policies which worsening global world order. There is a hope by the end of the Cold War, marked by the fall of Berlin Wall, US would take an initiative to create new world order that ensure the establishment of a more civilised, just and peaceful world. But soon the hope had proven untrue.

For your information, we condemned in the strongest possible manner the September 11, 2001 tragedy, a terrorist attack causing death and injuries of thousands of innocent Americans and other nationalities. We are in line with you that terrorism is the enemy of humankind that should be conquered together. However, your campaign on "War on Terror" that justifies the war in Afghanistan and Iraq are irrational and unacceptable. Your Excellency must realise that war is not the answer. One can not democratize a country with undemocratic ways. Your wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, in fact, have been creating culture of violence and hatred which in long run will bring disadvantages to America. Furthermore, Iraq and Afghanistan as your occupation territories could turn into fertile soils to cultivate new generation of terrorist.

In this regard we strongly urge American government to:

1. End your hegemonic and double standard foreign policies that suffer, especially, developing countries.

2. Stop invasion and aggression as well as using military actions to any independence states.

3. Promote a culture of peace to resolve disputes among states and nations through dialogue and mediation.

4. Take serious initiatives together with other countries to continually reform the United Nations so that it could play a more effective role in maintaining international peace and security and development.

Finally, we welcome you to Indonesia and we do hope that our voices be heard. We never hate our American friends; we just disagree with your unjust foreign policies.

Best Regard,
Indonesian Youth Religious Organisations

[M. Izzul Muslimin](#), Chairman, Muhammadiyah Youth

[A. Malik Haramain](#), Secretary General, Ansor Youth (Nahdlatul Ulama)

[I. Nyoman Gde Agus Asrama](#), Chairman, Indonesian Hindu Youth Association

[Ponijan Liaw](#), Chairman, Young Generation of Indonesian Buddhists

[Sahat Sinaga](#), Chairman, Indonesian Young Christians' Movement

[M.T. Natalis Situmorang](#), Chairman, Catholic Youth

[Kristan](#), Chairman, Confucian Youth

End text.

PASCOE